EPI Update for Friday, December 13, 2013 Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) lowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- Influenza activity update
- National Influenza Vaccination Week
- Chikungunya virus in the western hemisphere
- Very high blood lead levels among adults U.S. 2002-2011
- Iowa Acute Disease Monthly Update
- Meeting announcements and training opportunities

Influenza activity update

Influenza activity in Iowa remains sporadic, but it has increased over the past few weeks. So far this season the dominant strain is 2009 H1N1 which first emerged in 2009 and continued to be prevalent until last year, when H3N2 was dominant. When H1N1 first appeared in the United States during the 2009-2010 flu season, the strain hit the young and middle-aged adults (normally not a high-risk age group) hardest. This year's flu vaccine includes this H1N1 strain. Plenty of vaccine is available for anyone not yet vaccinated to get the vaccine and increase the likelihood of a healthy holiday season. For more information on flu activity, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/IdphArchive/Archive.aspx?channel=FluReports

National Influenza Vaccination Week

December 8-14, 2013 is National Influenza Vaccination Week, highlighting the importance of influenza vaccination in preventing influenza and influenza-related complications and to promote continuing influenza vaccination throughout the season.

Chikungunya virus in the western hemisphere

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported the first local (autochthonous) transmission of chikungunya virus in the Americas. As of December 12, 10 cases have been confirmed on St. Martin in the Caribbean.

Chikungunya virus is a mosquito-borne alphavirus transmitted primarily by *Aedes aegypti* and *Ae. albopictus*. Humans are the primary reservoir during epidemics. Outbreaks have been described in Africa, Southern Europe, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Prior to the cases on St. Martin, the only chikungunya cases described in the Americas were in travelers returning from endemic areas.

Chikungunya virus infection should be considered in patients with acute onset of fever and polyarthralgias who recently returned from the Caribbean. Chikungunya virus RT-PCR, as well as IgM and IgG antibody assays are available at CDC, a few state health departments (but not at Iowa's SHL), and at least one commercial laboratory.

At this time, there are no reports of other suspect chikungunya cases in the region. However, further spread on St. Martin and to other countries in the region is possible. For more information visit www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/.

Very high blood lead levels among adults - U.S. 2002-2011

In CDC's recent Morbidity and Mortality Weekly (which included Iowa data) reported that some adults in the United States have very high blood lead levels (BLLs), often after being exposed over an extended period of time. These chronically exposed adults had BLLs above levels known to cause neurologic, cardiovascular, reproductive, hematologic and kidney adverse effects. The risks for adverse chronic health effects are higher if the exposure is maintained for many years.

The report identified 11,536 adults from 2002–2011 with very high BLLs (\geq 40 μ g/dL). Among those with a known exposure source, occupational exposures accounted for 91% of adults with very high BLLs.

Health care providers should be aware that the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) lead standards give them broad flexibility to tailor protections to the worker's needs, including consideration of removal from lead exposure at BLLs lower than the current OSHA lead standards require.

Read the entire report at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6247a6.htm or contact the lowa's Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology and Surveillance (ABLES) program at www.idph.state.ia.us/LPP/ABLES.aspx, 800-972-2026.

Iowa Acute Disease Monthly Update

The new issue of the Iowa Acute Disease Monthly Update is available by visiting www.idph.state.ia.us/cade/ and scrolling down to 'Reports.'

Meeting announcements and training opportunitiesNone

Have a healthy and happy week (and a bit snowy)!

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